

MORE EXQUISITE HOPEWELL EFFIGY PIPES FROM THE SQUIER AND DAVIS COLLECTION

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Timeless, solemn, and elegant in conception and form-Hopewell effigy pipes are revealed in their pleasing shape and detail in these photographs from the British Museum.

Past issues of *Ohio Archaeologist* have included a series of articles that featured photographs of bird, snake, frog and reptile effigy pipes from the collection of Ephraim Squier and Edwin Davis, now held in the British Museum. This series of articles would not be complete without examining pipes that depict mammals from the same collection. Indeed, a deeper appreciation for these objects can be realized by considering the wide variety of carved figures—and then considering them as a whole group. The group presents a pantheon of animals worked within the form of a platform pipe. While somewhat stylized, each was carved with animate details, and consistently posed to suggest an interaction with their human partners in a smoking ceremony. Like chapters making up a great epic, the group in its entirety is exactly what is so remarkable—and a quality that makes these objects among the finest works of pre-Columbian art in North America.

According to British Museum notes, all of the pipes pictured here were unearthed in Mound City, Mound 8 in Ross County, Ohio. They are attributed to the Hopewell and are dated from 200 B.C. to 400 A.D.

Wild Cat Pipes Figures 1 to 5 are British Museum photographs of a fine pipe depicting a wild cat. Catalog description states that the pipe was “made of dark brown pipe stone,” and measures 7.5 centimeters in length, 2.7 centimeters in width, and 4 centimeters in height. The pipe is also described



Figure 1 (Rusnak) Wildcat pipe from the Squier and Davis Collection in the British Museum. See Figures 2 through 5.

as “bearing several repairs.” Figure 6 is a black line drawing of the pipe from *Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley*.

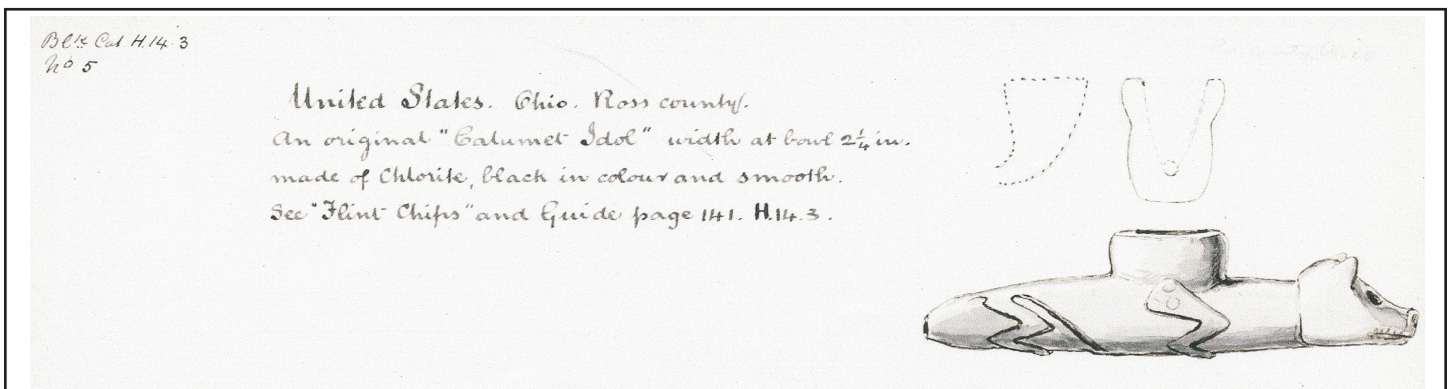
Much detail is carved into the face, especially in the nose, eyes and prominent whiskers. Interestingly, William C. Mills likely refers to this particular pipe in his 1916 work *Exploration of the Tremper Mound*. He notes that wild cat bones were “found in abundance” at the Baum and Gartner sites, and comments that the Tremper cats are so similar to one in *Ancient Monuments* that “one would be led to believe that all were made by the same sculptor.”

Figures 7 to 10 are of another pipe in the form of a feline and made of pipestone. Museum Catalog comments that it is “partially re-constructed from excavated frag-

ments,” and measures 10 centimeters in length, 2.5 centimeters in width, and 4.5 centimeters in height. This effigy has a column rising from the platform to the effigy’s body forming the pipe bowl.

While the black line from *Ancient Monuments* (figure 11) is a fair representation of the side view, the photographs reveal animated details in the face of the effigy, which, unfortunately, were missed in a side-view drawing. The pipe also bears a number of carved lines in the body, which mimic the animal’s spotted and striped color patterns. It almost has the look of a South American ocelot.

Figures 12-16 show four views of a fragment of a third pipe depicting a wild cat, along with the black line drawing (figure



17) from *Ancient Monuments*. Museum notes state that “The rear section has been sheared leaving only the head, forelegs and front platform.” The fragment measures 8 centimeters in length, 3.6 centimeters in width, and 6.1 centimeters in height. It is also made of pipestone. Even in its fragmented condition, the piece retains a sense of calm serenity. Shaped in a relaxed but attentive pose, its attraction is immediate.

What is consistent with all three examples is the amount of attention paid to carving detail in the faces of the cats. Indeed, there is a kind of attentive expression in the faces of each. As much as any of the other types of creatures depicted, the cat pipes were carved with a delicate sense of animation.

Rodent Pipe

The fourth example is a pipe described as “in the form of a rodent” and made of “red/brown pipestone” in the Museum notes is shown in figures 18-20. It measures 7 centimeters in length, 3 centimeters in width, and 3 centimeters in height. The Museum catalog comments it is “reconstructed from excavated fragments, the piece appears largely intact.” It is further described as follows:

The effigy sits toward the end of the platform with its tail, given low relief, curled underneath. The rodent is portrayed in a begging stance with light incisions indicating claws and facial features.

In *Ancient Monuments*, this same pipe is identified as an otter (figure 21) due to its “almost imperceptible ears, rounded body and short but strong and fin-like legs.” Regardless of its identification, Squier and Davis recognized its animate and lively quality, commenting that it “enables us to recognize at once the most active, courageous and voracious” animal.

The effigy’s attentive pose is consistent with other examples. The body position implies an interaction with the smoker.

Tremper Mound Pipes

It is fascinating to look at the group of Squier and Davis pipes from Mound City pipes in conjunction with the many pipes found at Tremper. These are pictured in William C. Mills’ report *Exploration of the Tremper Mound* (also see the fine layout in Robert Converse’s *Archaeology of Ohio*, pp. 282-285).

As mentioned above, Mills noted a similarity of two wild cat pipes described in Tremper Mound (pp. 151-153, figures 21-22) to one pictured in *Ancient Monuments*, that say they could have been “made by the same sculptor.” The similarity he noted might be more accurately described as a recognizable style among the Hopewell artists. Similarity of style is present in other examples as well. The Mink pipe of Tremper and one of the snake pipes of Mound

City (figures 23 and 24) are similar in their composition. Both have a sense of movement, and both present the animal in an outline that curls around the bowl, ending with eye contact to the smoker. Both retain the basic form of a platform pipe with its typically-shaped bowl visible underneath the animal.

Conclusion

Photographs in *Ohio Archaeologist* of bird, snake, frog and reptile, and now these elegant cat effigy pipes can help us study and appreciate them both individually and as a group. The wide variety of animals depicted—their life-like forms and attentive positions—create a deliberate relationship between the carved animal and its human partner—two sides, two active participants. One is as important as the other.

These are artistic qualities that transcend time. The animal effigy pipes of Ohio—both those of Mound City and Tremper—are a remarkable artistic achievement. They stand as testimony to the creativity of the Hopewell Culture. The delight we sense when we see them in photographs, such as these of the wildcat pipes, fosters an emotional connection with the people of Ohio’s distant past.

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Figures 2 & 3 (Rusnak) Photographs from the British Museum are copyright of the Trustees of the British Museum. They are printed here with permission according to terms and conditions of the British Museum. Much thanks to the Museum for allowing the Archaeological Society of Ohio to print these photographs.



Figures 4 & 5 (Rusnak) Five views of a wildcat pipe.



Figure 6 (Rusnak) Drawing of wildcat pipe from *Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley*.



Figures 7 through 10 (Rusnak) Four views of a wildcat pipe with center bowl.

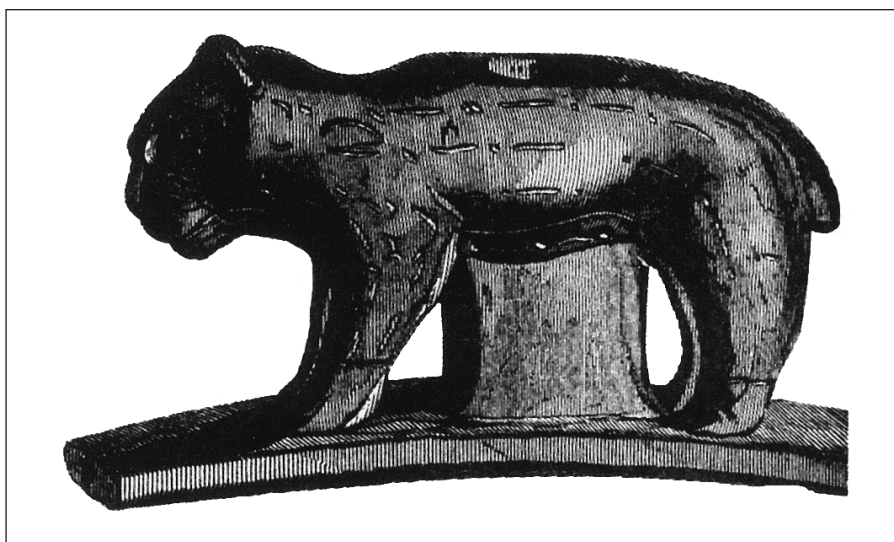


Figure 11 (Rusnak) Drawing of wildcat pipe from *Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley*.



Figures 12 through 15 (Rusnak) Four views of wildcat pipe fragment.

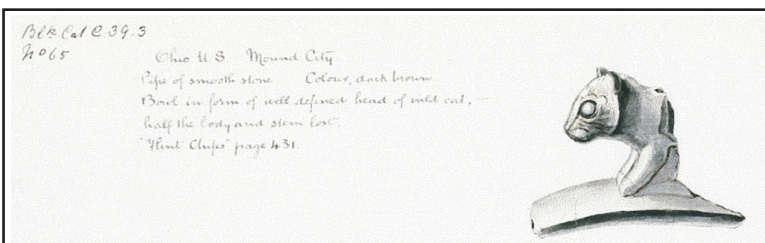
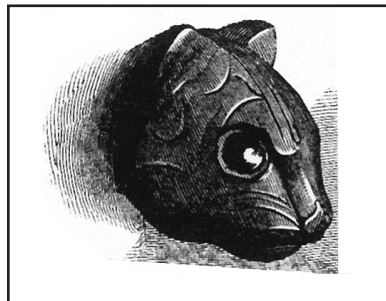


Figure 16 (Rusnak) Drawing entry in the British Museum Catalog.

Figure 17
(Rusnak) Drawing
from Ancient
Monuments of
the Mississippi
Valley.





Figures 18 through 20 (Rusnak) Three views of rodent pipe.

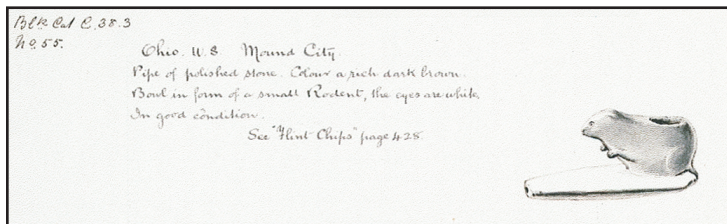


Figure 21 (Rusnak) Drawing of British Museum Catalog entry.

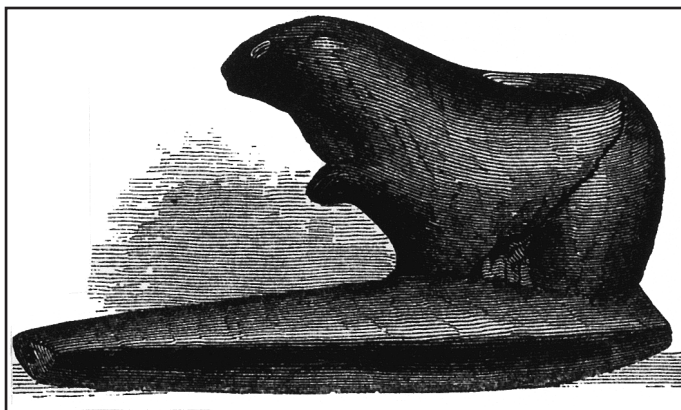


Figure 22 (Rusnak) Drawing from Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley.



Figures 23 and 24 (Rusnak) Note stylistic similarity between mink pipe from Tremper and snake pipe from Mound City.



Figures 25 and 26 (Rusnak) Two wildcat pipes from Tremper Mound from Mill's Exploration of the Tremper Mound 1916.